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WAR WORK

OF

WOMEN IN COLLEGES

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WAR WORK OF WOMEN IN COLLEGES.

How the Colleges Met the War Emergency.
College War Courses.
Student War Activities.
Employment for College Women.

How American colleges for women met the new responsibilities imposed on them by war conditions is told in 150 answers to questionnaires sent from the Division on Woman's War Work of the Committee on Public Information to the colleges of the country. These answers do not, of course, completely cover the war work done by the colleges. Conspicuous features have been taken from the letters of presidents and deans, and from catalogues and bulletins, and collated to give an idea of the work of college girls during the ten months that America has been at war.

The interests and activities of the college girl as a national figure are represented, for the information comes from State universities, small colleges in the South, schools in New York, and in middle western towns, old eastern colleges for women, and colleges where almost all the students are self-supporting. Though the schools differ in size and courses, there is a uniformity in the questions which the presidents and deans are asking. The general questions are:

1. What are the various types of courses being offered for women in college since the war emergency has arisen? Do they receive credit?
2. What are the war activities of other college women?
3. What can the college girl do for war service?

Glimpses of the eagerness of the college girls to do war work is shown by the following quotations from letters written to the director of the Division on Woman's War Work: "Many of the girls who will be graduated this year desire to go directly into some active war work." "Our seniors are asking what they can go into." "What are the definite requirements for work in France?" "What war work can our girls do in the summer?"

HOW THE COLLEGES MET THE WAR EMERGENCY.

The agency directing war work in many of the colleges is a "war council," composed sometimes of faculty, sometimes of students, usually of representatives of both. This organization acts under various names in different places, such as "The Women's League," "War Relief Committee," "War Emergency Committee," "Patriotic

League of the Y. W. C. A.," and is a clearing house for war activities outside the regular curriculum. In many cases this agency registers the girls and secures a definite idea of the amount of time they can give to war work. The Bryn Mawr war council has departments of registration, food production, food conservation, maintenance of existing social agencies, education, liberty loan, Red Cross, and allied relief. An unusual feature of their educational department is a college bureau of information and speakers, which disseminates war information of interest to the college, and arranges for visiting speakers, trains those interested in public speaking on war subjects, and provides material for them.

The Columbia University Committee on Woman's War Work has 8,000 members. It provides volunteers for special purposes such as liberty bond selling and food conservation, as well as general activities. Dean Emily Talbot, at the University of Chicago, asked all the women to pledge certain services. This pledge was printed on a card which put the whole range of possible interests before the girls, and (since the pledge cards were signed and returned) registered what active support was on hand. Through the office of Mrs. Lois Kimball Matthews, dean of women at the University of Wisconsin, a "war service" badge was awarded each girl who registered last spring for at least six weeks of serious summer occupation.

Goucher College, at Baltimore, Md., formulated a war preparedness plan which has been adopted either in its entirety or in part by Milwaukee-Downer College, and other schools. The "Goucher plan," taken from the Bulletin of 1916 and 1917, is as follows:

WAR PREPAREDNESS PLAN.

A state of war between this country and Germany was declared during the Easter vacation. As soon as the students returned, steps were taken by them in cooperation with the faculty to place Goucher College on a war preparedness basis. Plans were made for the mobilization of the students, which included physical, mental, and specific preparedness. The students enthusiastically adopted and signed the following pledge:

1. Physical preparedness. (This outlines a program of simple and sensible living.)

2. Mental preparedness. "In order that I may be informed as to the causes of the war, its progress, the changes that have come in the reasons why the nations are at war, particularly why the United States is forced to engage therein, I will attend the 8 or 10 lectures to be given by the history department of Goucher College, and will read something every day, either in newspapers, periodicals, or books, recognized as supporting the policy of our Government."

3. Specific preparedness. "In addition to preparing myself physically and mentally, as above set forth, I will conscientiously take account of my own fitness and inclinations and give myself over to specific training offered by some one of the departments of Goucher College. I will give this time outside of my regular class-room and laboratory duties. I will be loyal and faithful in this regard and will do all in my power to stimulate the loyalty and faithfulness of my fellow students. I will undertake this specific preparedness willingly and enthusiastically, thankful for the opportunity it gives me to respond to my country's call.

The specific war courses were: Agriculture, nutrition and food values, clinical work, wireless telegraphy, automobile mechanism, bookkeeping and typewriting, foreign languages (with attention to military and business terms), and social service in war time. The Bulletin further states:

The students entered upon war preparedness work, for which they received no credit, with enthusiasm and earnestness. Of the 622 students, more than 500 signed the application cards as soon as they were printed.

COLLEGE WAR COURSES.

It is impossible to estimate the number of "war courses" for which the colleges are giving credit, as there is no definite data on the subject. The usual policy seems to be to give credit only to those that can be taught by a regular department of the college, and which are connected definitely with the regular work of that department, or those which are already in the curriculum and are changed to meet the emergency. For instance, at Wellesley, the various war courses such as home nursing and stenography are outside the curriculum, and receive no credit, while wireless telegraphy and map making, given under the physics and geology departments, are rated as regular subjects. Similarly many of the schools have war courses in history, for which credit is given. The political science department at the University of Indiana has a timely course in problems of American foreign policy, one of the subjects studied being international relations. At other places, this is under the head of "war problems." In general, the "war emergency" courses are given in the time formerly devoted to recreation. Usually, no freshman is allowed to elect more than one, and no student can be enrolled unless her work is up to the regular standard.

It is interesting to note that home economics and business courses are being given in schools which formerly have had no work in that line. The average war courses are: Business, hygiene, social service in war time, and home economics. A list of typical war courses in and outside the curriculum, and taken from the recent reports of the colleges, is: Landline telegraphy, wireless telegraphy, automobile mechanics, nautical astronomy, navigation, elementary nursing, first aid, principles of war relief, draftsmanship, medical laboratory methods, map drawing, home economics (dietetics, conservation of food, training for work in cafeterias and soup kitchens) industrial chemistry, farm management, surgical dressings, office routine (all business training for office work) and a course for teachers of occupational therapy.

The Harvard Dental School is giving a training course for women dental hygienists. Schools of civics and philanthropy are giving work in social service in war time, protective work with girls, and constructive recreation. The engineering department in several universities shows enrollment of women. At the College of the City of New York, the offer of a junior engineering course open to graduates of the wireless class at Hunter College, establishes radio engineering as a new profession for women. At Kansas State Agricultural College, there are 150 women studying to become electrical engineers. The Collegiate Alumnæ Journal quotes Clarence Reid, professor of electrical engineering at the Kansas school, as saying:

> Women are being employed as power-plant operators in the large central stations of Europe and have been found entirely satisfactory. None of the machinery in these stations is operated by hand, but is all controlled by various forms of electric motors, set into operation by the touch of a button or by electric magnets or air pressure, or controlled in some manner so that physical strength is not at all necessary. Work of this kind is far less exhausting than many forms of work in which women are now engaged, for central station operators may use seats and have more variety of movement in their work. Desirable qualification for entering upon engineering study comprise ability in mathematics and interest in scientific study.

About 200 students at Mount Holyoke are taking stenography, typewriting, bookkeeping, dietetics, war relief, and first aid. Vassar College has four war preparedness courses—hygiene, shorthand and typewriting, training for work with aliens, and home economics. Wellesley's war plan calls for instruction in the following subjects: First aid, statistics and filing, stenography and typewriting, bookkeeping, history, household economics, gardening, wireless telegraphy, and map making.

STUDENT WAR ACTIVITIES.

Apart from the war courses, economy, the raising of relief funds, and Red Cross work is an index to the contribution of the college girl to the war. The program of war economy in most of the colleges calls for simplicity in social life. Banquets and expensive parties are tabooed. Vassar has abolished Junior Prom and Class Day, and has adopted as one of her war mottoes: "No frills and fripperies." Half of the usual dances at the University of Colorado have been given up, and those that are given are of the simplest nature. Goucher has suspended the publication of the annual yearbook, with the provision that the price of subscription for the year's issue will be turned by every subscriber to the war fund. At the University of Wisconsin, there is a committee on student expenditures to induce more simple entertainments and more care in personal expenditures. Several schools have urged their girls to ask their parents for regular rather than intermittent and variable allowances, and to keep strict account of their expenditures, planning on the personal budget system, as far in advance as possible. Many student organizations are adopting the budget plan and cutting down appropriations and expenses. The Junior Promenade at Wisconsin has been abandoned, and in its stead a "Liberty bond ball" will be given.

At least a third of the schools have reported not only an observance of the wheatless and meatless days but a willingness for more food saving on the part of the girls. The University of Arizona has six wheatless meals in addition to those on the regular wheatless day. Mount Holyoke girls eat war bread six days out of seven, and have two meatless days a week. They voted in the spring to do without butter at dinner in order to devote the money saved to the Red Cross. Salem College, in North Carolina, imposes fines for wasting food at the table. At the University of Colorado the home economics department is giving lectures before boarding house keepers and fraternity and sorority house managers. Grinnell College in Iowa has done away with the selling of sweets on the campus, and the sentiment has been such that the consumption of candy has been greatly reduced.

In the line of economy, college war gardens are an important feature. These are contemplated at several schools for the coming year. A few institutions cultivated gardens last season, and usually the vegetables produced supplied the dormitory kitchens. Grinnell had a war garden worked entirely by college women. Although it was started late, it produced 6 tons of produce, and the girls are planning a larger and better one this year. Two girls in charge of the gardens of the "kitchen gardening" department of the University of Wisconsin during the summer engaged a booth at the city market, where they sold their produce for the benefit of the Red Cross.

The Collegiate Alumnæ Journal for September, 1917, speaks of the Goucher College gardens:

Squads of girls planted a large plot of ground with vegetables, the cultivation of which was turned over to the city students during the summer. This part of the plan has been successful beyond expectation, and has yielded a goodly supply of vegetables for canning. In fact, the experiment has proved so satisfactory that it will probably be continued next year on a larger scale, and the ultimate development is likely to be a permanent farm or garden worked by the students for the production of college supplies.

Farm work at Mount Holyoke is described by Dean Purrington:

The work was begun early in the spring by asking for volunteers from the student body to give some time each week during the spring term. Four hundred responded to this, and the volunteers were divided into squads of about 20 students each with a leader. These squads were called by the superintendent of the farm as they were needed. The college owns farm land which has not been under cultivation for a number of years. About 14 acres were plowed and harrowed by men, and practically all the rest of the work was done by the students. They removed brush, scattered fertilizer, planted crops, hoed, pulled weeds, picked potato bugs, and sprayed the vegetables that needed it.

During the summer there were three squads of 18 students each employed and each squad worked a month, beginning with June 15. The college kept open one of its smaller houses for these students, paid a cook, and furnished the food. Some of the college matrons gave their services as superintendent of the house. The girls did the housework with the exception of what the cook did. The time given by each student to farming was four hours a day and to housework one hour. With one or two exceptions, the students had not had previous agricultural experience. The leaders of the squads received instructions from the manager and his assistant, and these leaders in turn instructed the squads.

Although the girls did not have systematic training beforehand, they gathered a good deal of information as they worked. From the point of food production the experiment was a decided success. The financial statement has just been issued and shows that all expenses were covered, including the cost of implements, and that there is a small surplus in money. A kitchen garden helped to lessen the expenses for board. The crops raised were those that could be used in furnishing the college table. The last squad, which came about the middle of August, had comparatively little out-of-door work to do, so under the direction of the head of the department of botany they devoted a good deal of their time to drying and pickling. It did not seem advisable for the college to go into canning, as it would have involved a large outlay in equipment, but many bushels of corn were dried and string beans laid down in salt. After the opening of college in September, volunteers were called out to help harvest the crops. The summer farmers came back to college this fall in unusually fine physical condition and are most enthusiastic about the work. I think the majority of them would be glad to undertake the same work again next summer should it seem wise to continue the experiment.

The "agricultural unit" of Vassar College worked on the model farm which supplies much of the food for the college dining rooms. In the spring when the shortage of labor became evident, 14 girls volunteered to work during the summer until harvest. They were chosen from a group of applicants and passed a physical examination. They commenced June 17 and finished the work August 11. Starting at 4 o'clock in the morning, they worked at every kind of farm labor—harvesting, running machinery, etc. At the agricultural exhibition at Springfield, Mass., in the fall they gave a demonstration of their ability as practical farmers. The Collegiate Alumnæ Journal says:

The girls are paid 17½ cents an hour. Their day averages 8 to 9 hours work. Both head farmer and gardener say the girls have done much better than they expected and are equal to if not more thorough than the men in comparable tasks. The adverse comments and predictions as to the effectiveness of the girls' work have been utterly disproved, as have the warnings of physical breakdowns.

The raising of relief funds and subscriptions to the liberty loan has met a really tremendous response from college women. Shoe shining, hairdressing, making beds, every sort of work, has its cash equivalent to enable the girls to meet their quota of the funds. In one of the halls at Wellesley there are signs on every door, giving lists of the work which the occupants can do, with prices attached. Many of the deans speak of the way in which students are economizing this year and diverting the money spent on luxuries to the student friendship fund, Red Cross membership, etc. Salem College has a unique method of raising funds. The student body has not incurred the expense of printing the college paper, The Ivy, this year. Instead, the editor reads the articles received for the usual departments of the magazine to the students. The advertisers have patriotically agreed to pay the usual amount for space, and the advertisements are read also. The complete file of the magazine thus prepared will be presented to the college at the end of the year.

At practically every college with which the Committee on Public Information has been in communication, there is an active Red Cross organization, either as a separate unit or as an auxiliary to the local chapter. Everywhere, leisure hours seem to be measured in terms of sweaters for soldiers and sailors, pinafores for refugee babies, and bandages for the wounded. In many colleges a room has been turned over to surgical dressings work under the supervision of a trained nurse or one of the faculty who has had the proper training. At St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., 120 out of 260 women have Red Cross certificates in first aid. Twenty have received training as supervisors of surgical dressings, and the workrooms are conducted under their charge.

In some colleges Red Cross is not left to the casual worker but is organized in a military way. The president of the "Social Service" at Rockford College, Rockford, Ill., is the commanding officer of the organization and under her are captains who have charge of the squads and see that they give their pledged amount of time to the workrooms. Reed College, Portland, Oreg., has a military organization for knitting, with captains in charge of 13 companies who oversee the work. At Randolph-Macon in Lynchburg, Va., the "Sophomore Militia" has made 52 pairs of curtains and 20 sofa pillows for the Hostess House at Camp Lee. The "Freshman Relief Corps" is completing 100 comfort kits. At this school the waitresses in the various dining rooms have done splendid work in helping with sewing done for the Lynchburg Red Cross chapter. New York University is installing five knitting machines for making socks, and free lessons will be given both men and women.

Innumerable other patriotic measures have been undertaken. The girls of almost every coeducational college, from which such great numbers of men have gone to training camps and the front, provided Christmas boxes for the soldiers, and many have an arrangement which assures each soldier at least one letter a week. Hope College, Holland, Mich., has a card index with the addresses of the Hope men in service, and the University of Washington girls keep a card file of the 1,000 university men who are in the fighting forces in order to supply them with copies of the college daily paper. "Chocolate bar days," when contributions are taken to buy chocolate bars for the Oregon boys in the service, is the latest plan of college girls at the

Oregon State Agricultural College. The women of Reed College, Portland, Oregon, have established an emergency fund for Reed men who have enlisted. This fund will take care of Reed men and dependents, and will help the students who return disabled to finish their college work. At Oberlin and other schools each boarding hall and dormitory is enlisted for the support of one or more French orphans. There is a College Periodical League which furnishes soldiers and sailors with magazines.

College alumnæ have been of active service in connection with all the organizations for women's war service. The Association of Collegiate Alumnæ is issuing war bulletins to its members and is concentrating its attention upon a speaker's bureau to cooperate with the Speaking Division of the Committee on Public Information. It has in its membership thousands of women who are trained public speakers. Through them it will reach the people in the most remote districts, using for that purpose various agencies to secure audiences. Women's College Clubs in several cities are the registration places for volunteer service.

There has been a great amount of interest shown in the work of the Smith College Relief Unit which is now at work in the devastated district of France. This unit is composed of 20 women of varied types of training. Two are physicians; several have large experience in social work; some know France thoroughly; a few are skilled motor drivers. One can teach cobbling, which she learned when teaching in a mountain school in the South. She has practiced further under a French shoemaker and hopes to teach the trade to French children. The following description is taken from a letter sent out to Smith alumnæ by Helen Rand Thayer:

At Grecourt in the Somme, quartered in the grounds of an old chateau, Smith College is making its latest if not its greatest tradition. On a limited diet, in chilly quarters, the unit is doing a tremendous work. The members have undertaken the rehabilitation of a district of 16 villages, with a population of about 1,200 persons, chiefly older women and children. They have established dispensaries, play centers, a community farm, and stores. They are cooperating with the Government in the opening of schools which have been closed for three years and starting industrial classes and workshops. In the little church at Grecourt they arranged for the first service since the opening of the war, a service to which the people for miles around came with tears of joy. The need is tremendous. The homes are in ruins, the people without clothing, household appliances, or farm implements. They are living in cellar holes or the flimsiest of shacks. The children are undernourished. Lumber for housing, beds and bedding, clothes, and shoes must be had at once. Coal is $120 a ton, and gasoline $1.50 a gallon. The unit owns and runs three trucks. Mrs. Hawes, the first director, has been ill, and Dr. Tallanthas has been appointed the director, with Marie Wolfs as assistant.

EMPLOYMENT FOR COLLEGE WOMEN.

In answer to the question, "What actual war service can the college girl do?" the reports of the intercollegiate bureaus of occupation in New York City, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Denver, and Los Angeles throw an illuminating light upon the present opening for college girls in industry.

The New York bureau's statement of its experience seems to be true of the others:

The typical call from the employer is not for some one to fill a place of importance made vacant by the draft. Such positions are being filled by promotions within the establishments in which they occur. We find that employers are under the

pressure of increased business and increased costs, so that they are unwilling to take the time to train a beginner. In short, training and experience are demanded as never before.

However, the Chicago bureau says, in November:

The collegiate bureau sees the shining side of the shield of war in the varied opportunities of work for women. We have chemists at work with the Western Electric Co., which for the first time in its history has opened the doors of its laboratory to women, and many calls for secretaries and translators with a knowledge of French and Spanish.

The report of the Detroit Branch is also representative of the other cities:

We are feeling very distinctly the demand for women with technical training and mathematical minds.

Quoting from reports of different bureaus:

A number of industrial laboratories show a tendency to employ women where only men have been employed. Anyone with organic and inorganic chemistry can find openings in analytical work. Those with a knowledge of statistics are in great demand. Women in Wall Street say that business statisticians will be needed by large corporations.

The report of the Philadelphia bureau in reference to the agricultural situation in that part of the country is:

Specially trained agriculturists have been placed as farm and vegetable garden managers, some to carry on the work for themselves, others to teach groups of girls practical methods of vegetable gardening. Far more women have evinced an interest in farm work than the department has been able to place. A survey was made of the conditions existing in the surrounding countries. The results obtained show that the farmers about Philadelphia in general have not wanted inexperienced woman labor for outdoor farm work because there has been an ample supply of unskilled men and boys whose work was preferable. Next year may bring more acute labor needs.

The Mayor's Committee of Women on National Defense of New York City in December suggests the formation of agricultural units for college girls this summer in the following statement:

To increase the food supply means that there must be more labor on farms. Women have demonstrated in Europe that they are able to perform efficiently almost any kind of farm work. Why not let them try it here? Most farmers in this country are not used to women as farm hands; they must be persuaded to try them and be convinced of their value. One great difficulty in the way of getting farmers is the impossibility of housing and feeding them in the farmer's household. To meet this situation the unit plan is proposed; that is, the organization of groups of women workers, numbering from 6 to 50 or more, who shall live and eat together in a central place, and go out from there singly or in squads to work by the day on farms or estates in the vicinity. They may live in a house unused and loaned for the purpose, or in a barn temporarily fitted up for camping, or in tents.

Of the need for women in nursing, Miss Jane Delano, director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service, says:

For many years to come the demand for women trained for nursing, including welfare work and health service, will increase tremendously, and to meet this need women of ability and education can do no better than to take seriously the work of training as nurses, believing that they are not only qualifying themselves for most important service on the completion of their course, but that even during the period of training, they are helping to solve the nursing problems confronting us. If the women of America fail to realize their duty at this time the American men who have been called upon to offer their lives for their country may suffer accordingly.

Vassar College is to give its equipment this summer for a three months' preliminary course in subjects required in the best schools for nursing. The girls will come from classes of 1908 to 1918, in the colleges under the Collegiate Alumnæ Association. A partial list of the subjects in the course is: Household management, elementary nursing, including bandaging, anatomy, physiology, applied chemistry, bacteriology,

hology, hospital economics, dietetics and allied subjects. This preliminary ining as a nurse will admit the students to training schools where credit of from six nine months, or in some cases, one full year, will be given. The Red Cross has ppropriated $75,000 for the summer's work.

It has been announced that 37,000 nurses will be needed in the Army Nurse Corps. The creation of a corps to be known as "Reconstruction Aides" whose work it will be to assist in the first stage of "rebuilding" and reeducating disabled soldiers sent back from France is a part of the reconstruction program of the Government. Miss Marguerite Sanderson, president of the Boston School of Physical Education, is the supervisor of the new corps. Teachers of physical education and those who have specialized in corrective work with hospital experience are most likely, it is stated, to have the preparation necessary for the work the new corps will do.

Several deans of women have asked "What way can the Government utilize women?" The increased needs of the Federal departments have opened many positions. There is a constant call for stenographers and typists. Although examinations are being held weekly, the demand does not decrease, rather it grows. Information about civil service examinations and the dates of examining may be had from the United States Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.; Secretary of the United States Civil Service Commission Board, Custom House, Boston, Mass.; New York City; New Orleans, La.; Post Office, Philadelphia, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Chicago, Ill.; St. Paul, Minn.; Seattle, Wash.; San Francisco, Cal.; Old Custom House, St. Louis, Mo.

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